# ABSTRACT

**Background**: In Cameroon, prevalence of blindness is estimated at 1% of the total population (about 20million people) with cataract accounting for 50% of this occurrence. The population at higher risk are rural dwellers and people with lower socio-economic status. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and Centre Intelligence Agency (CIA) stated that 43% of Cameroon population live in rural areas and 40% live below the poverty line. The Cameroon Government and health development partners set up strategies to eliminate preventable blindness in accordance with the WHO-VISION 2020 goal, Right to Sight. However, financing poses a challenge to sustainability of eye care service delivery.

**Aim and Objectives**: To explore sustainable means of financing eye care through examining community’s knowledge and participation in eye care and the Community Based Health Insurance Schemes (CBHI) in Buea, Cameroon. The objectives include outlining recommendation to address challenges towards promoting viability of scheme to promoting financial sustainability of eye care service provision.

**Method**: Qualitative research involving Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Community-based individual interviews. Recruiting 16 respondents from the community and district eye care units as well as key officers engaged in programmes. Interviews were transcribed and data coded by thematic analysis.

**Results**: Although there was a fairly high perception of benefit of CBHI schemes, identified as the Mutual Health Organisation (MHO) and Bermanda Ecclesiastical Province Health Assistance (BEPHA), to providing financial protection for health care, the community members interviewed lacked adequate knowledge of schemes and participation rate was low. Limited knowledge of eye care was also identified as a barrier to uptake of services.

**Conclusion**: To improve cost recovery towards promoting financial sustainability for eye care service provision in Buea, increased sensitisation for eye care to promote uptake is necessary. Community awareness of benefit of scheme would encourage registration in schemes and increased pooling of funds.